

JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE

Measurement, Evaluation, Research & Learning (MERL) Specialist

SUPERVISOR

Technical supervision and oversight of MERL duties will be provided by the Director, MERL at IYF Baltimore, USA.

Daily oversight will be provided by the IYF Country Director, South Africa

JOB SUMMARY

The International Youth Foundation (IYF)—a global non-profit organization that works to improve the lives and conditions of young people worldwide—is seeking a Measurement, Evaluation, Research & Learning (MERL) Specialist. This new position in the IYF South Africa office will support programmes that strengthen publicly-funded training systems—such as public TVET colleges and employer managed learnerships—to better equip young people for academic and professional success.

The primary responsibility of this position will be to oversee the development and implementation of MERL plans for IYF South Africa programming, and to ensure data is used to inform programme management decisions and to enhance decision-making of IYF partners, including public institutions and the private sector. The MERL Specialist will also build IYF staff and partners' capacity in data collection, management and analysis, and utilizing data to guide management decisions. The MERL Specialist will work in close collaboration with IYF's global MERL Director (based in the United States)—including in the design of IYF South Africa's MERL system and plans—to ensure they integrate with IYF's global MERL systems, policies, and organizational learning priorities.

The candidate should be data-driven, detail-oriented, and a self-starter with excellent analytic and communication skills. In addition, the candidate should possess strong interpersonal skills and excel at building strong working relationships with colleagues and IYF partners, particularly government departments and public TVET colleges. Prior experience conducting MERL through programmes that work with public education institutions is highly desired.

This full-time position will be based in IYF's office in Johannesburg. For more information about IYF, please consult www.iyfnet.org.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop and implement Measurement, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) plans to track, analyse, and utilize project performance and results. This includes responsibility for data collection management, analysis, reporting, assessments, and all other related activities.
- Develop and oversee a data flow pattern that ensures an effective flow of data and information from the primary source to the end user.

- Find creative ways for conducting MERL within public education institutions, including through leveraging routine data collected by our public education partners, and through other models that limit reliance on public institutions to collect non-routine data on behalf of IYF.
- Manage IYF South Africa program and performance data through IYF's Systematic Tracking and Organizational Records Management System (STORM), which is IYF's management information system built on the Salesforce.com platform. Build IYF programme staff capacity to also utilise STORM for managing programme-related data.
- Provide ongoing support to IYF South Africa team and partners to ensure compliance and accuracy of data collection, STORM management and reporting according to donor, partner and IYF standards.
- Report results of MERL activities to various stakeholders, internal and external, including donors by providing written documentation about program results and progress toward achieving indicators/targets, as appropriate.
- Ensure high-quality implementation of the MERL System, in close collaboration with the IYF USA MERL Director, and consistency in protocols, information and reporting systems.
- Support the development of performance measurement frameworks for South Africa-related proposal development and project implementation efforts (e.g., theories of change, logical frameworks, performance monitoring plans, evaluation and learning plans).
- Lead the operationalization of the IYF Institutional Learning Agenda for South Africa-based programs.
- Conduct other duties, as assigned.

REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree and minimum 5 years of work experience in monitoring and evaluation of large programmes with a robust MERL component. Master's degree preferred.
- Experience conducting MERL through programmes implemented in partnership with public education systems, strongly preferred.
- Strong computer skills and experience working with one or more types of data analysis and management software (e.g., SPSS, STATA, R, etc.), and data management solutions (e.g., Salesforce, MySQL, etc.). Excellent knowledge of and experience using Advanced Microsoft Excel techniques.
- Demonstrated experience in data management and analysis, and in conducting data quality assessments and audits.
- Experience conducting assessments and using qualitative and quantitative tools (focus group discussions, surveys, interviews). Strong analytical skills and ability to synthesize information to inform planning and strategy.
- Strong English communication skills (written and spoken), program management, presentation, team-building and interpersonal skills, as well as an analytical ability to identify and establish priorities and attend to all details in a professional manner. Advanced critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Commitment to youth development and a values-driven work environment.
- Ability to travel nationally, as needed.



- To be eligible for this position, you must be a South African citizen or a permanent resident without work restrictions in South Africa.

LOCATION

Johannesburg, South Africa

To be eligible for this position, applicants must have the legal authority to work and reside in South Africa; position is a local hire position and local nationals are encouraged to apply.